**Antonio Calbi, Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in Paris**

Summer 2024 has been the Summer of sports for Paris. It has been like this for the Italian Cultural Institute too, as it celebrated the Paris 2024 Olympics and Paralympics with the rich Passions Olympique’s programme. This special Summer’s cultural programming was an opportunity to remember that the beauty of sport lies in its ‘peaceful’ competition, that sport is inclusive, just as culture should be. The Olympics and Paralympics have now ended, but the work for an accessible and inclusive culture never stops.

The monumental works created by the VulnerarTe Movement during a residency at the former prison of Velletri(close to Rome) engage in dialogue with the graffitis left by the inmates when the prison was still operational. In the movement’s practice, visual arts are combined with music, cinema, and dance in a significant project with a humble name: *iosonovulnerabile*. This multidisciplinary event reflects the complexity of the world we live in, where all the involved elements address a theme that culture must never forget: the vulnerability of those who create, the vulnerability of those who watch, and ultimately, the human vulnerability. The installations featured on this occasion invite us to look beyond the nightmares of the 21st Century—which began under the shadow of global terror with the destruction of the Twin Towers and continues today with the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Palestine—and thus summarize the daily goal we set for ourselves: to fight against abuses, wars, and violence through culture, the artistic gestures, and the exercise of thought and dialogue. These are actions through resilience which build the future in perspective.

*Iosonovulnerabile* is a research project directly inspired by Sergio Mario Illuminato’s book “Corpus et Vulnus: Tàpies, Kiefer, Parmiggiani”. The artistic practice motivating this project is the heir of informal and conceptual art. And it is not a coincidence if iosonovulnerabile will encounter at the Hôtel de Galliffet the work of the great Italian master of conceptual art: Claudio Parmiggiani. A canoe filled with pure powdered pigments will be the Honorary Work of the Autumn. Through this work, Parmiggiani stages the absence: the absence of water, the absence of the departure port and the destination, the absence of the rower. As in the works presented by the *iosonovulnerabile* project, the representation gives way to contemplation and meditation on the human condition. All these works lose their reason for being without the spectator: it is his presence, his gaze, and his inner movements that legitimize their meaning, allowing them to live and express by themselves.

There will be many more initiatives promoted by the Institute that will remind us how culture can make us think about the fragile condition of human reality: with the exhibition of Domenico Notarangelo’s photographs on the set of Pasolini’s *The Gospel According to Matthew*, we will rediscover a fragile Matera that had not yet regained pride in its millennial identity; with the reprise of *Voyage in Italy*, the account of transformations in the Italian landscape created by Luigi Ghirri, we will revisit the shattered beauties of the most beautiful peninsula in the world; the lucid and heartbreaking cry of Hecuba—Anna Galiena—in Alessandra Puliafico’s reworking of Euripides’ *The Women of Troy* will make us indignant against the destructions and sufferings caused by wars waged by men; we will remember Giacomo Matteotti, murdered by the fascists a hundred years ago; we will carefully approach the fragility of Goliarda Sapienza; we will discuss cities and humanity, the first episodes of a series of meetings realized in collaboration with the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales; Dacia Maraini will recount her childhood as a prisoner in a detention camp in Japan during World War II; we will remember the Mattarella crime through Aurelio Grimaldi’s film and we have invited Fiammetta Borsellino, daughter of the judge murdered by the terrible entanglement of mafia and corrupt powers, to share with us her commitment to educating future generations on legality, the first step towards renouncing all forms of violence.

This and much more to remind us that culture is an opportunity for education, growth, and sometimes even for fighting against injustices. The first step to achieve this goal is to accept our own fragilities. In a world that keeps asking for perfection, we choose to exalt the vulnerability, the beauty of the simple, pure gesture.